

# Pre-Orientation Retreat Assignment



The first few weeks of your AmeriCorps service year are an important time to meet people at your site and get a good understanding of the organization/school in which you will be serving as well as the issues you will be facing this year. To facilitate the transition into your site, we have prepared a Pre-Orientation Retreat assignment. Your task is to use the following questions to guide you in your introduction to educational equity/achievement gap issues in your school, school district, or, if you are an Organizational Fellow, among the youth served by your organization. You may need to ask other people for information in order to do this, or do some research of your own. Be sure to check out the Minnesota Department of Education Web site (<http://education.state.mn.us/mde/index.html>) and the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership ([www.mmep.org](http://www.mmep.org)) for information about your community. *Please bring a written copy (2–5 pages) of the information you gather to Orientation (September 19-21).*

## Defining educational equity and the achievement gap

- What is educational equity?
- How do I/my site define the achievement gap?

*Review recent test scores and graduation rate data for your school, school district, or the youth served by your organization.*

- How do particular groups of students (e.g., broken down by race, income, gender, etc.) tend to experience academic achievement at different levels? Where can I go to get this information?
- Who regularly reviews the data on the achievement gap and educational equity? What are they doing with the information at my site?

- What do I think are some of the causes for differences in levels of academic success?

## Youth programming

- What kinds of programs or services for the youth most affected by the achievement gap in your community were set up or revised based on the data?
- What programs already provide support for youth in my community? For which youth? Which populations are underserved?
- How do these youth-serving programs interact/connect?

## For Promise Fellows serving at schools

- Which youth will comprise the “cohort” of youth to receive targeted services during your year of service (should be 50–150 specific youth)? How was the cohort chosen? Who chose it?

## For Promise Fellows serving at organizations

- With which schools does your organization already partner? How does your organization hope to build the capacity of partner schools to build educational equity?

*Note: Your written work should be no more than 2–5 pages in length; you can choose to answer the questions using bullet points or in paragraph form. We will use this information to help with planning, training, and site visits, and it will be kept on file. For questions regarding the assignment, please e-mail Melissa (Melissa\_burwell @ faribault.k12.mn.us).*

*Thank you!*

**REMEMBER: BRING A WRITTEN COPY OF THIS INFORMATION (no more than 2-5 pages in length) TO ORIENTATION (September 19-21).**